Listing of Claims

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. – 6. (Cancelled)

DO NOT Enter 8/1/07

7. (Currently Amended) A method for screening a patient for a colorectal cancer or precancer, the method comprising the step of:

detecting in a patient ~~tissue or body fluid~~ stool sample comprising exfoliated cells a long nucleic acid fragment of a length greater than 200 base pairs ~~that is present in both normal and cancerous or precancerous cells~~, wherein a ~~said~~ fragment of said long nucleic acid having a length less than 200 base pairs is ~~of a length that is greater than a length of said nucleic acid~~ expected to be present in ~~said~~ a stool sample in a healthy patient;

the presence of said ~~fragment~~ long nucleic acid being a positive screen for a colorectal cancer or precancer.

8. (Currently Amended) A method for screening a patient for a colorectal cancer or precancer, the method comprising the steps of:

~~determining~~ detecting in a patient ~~tissue or body fluid~~ stool sample comprising exfoliated cells or cellular debris ~~whether an~~ a first amount of a long nucleic acid of a length ~~DNA fragment~~ greater than 200 base pairs in length; wherein said long nucleic acid is a degradation product of DNA that is present in both normal and cancerous or precancerous cells;

comparing the first amount of long nucleic acid in said patient stool sample to a second amount of said long nucleic acid present in a sample a from patient free of colorectal cancer or precancer;

determining whether said first amount of long nucleic acid exceeds ~~a predetermined~~ the second amount of long nucleic acid in said sample from a patient free of colorectal cancer or precancer ~~wherein said DNA fragment is a degradation product of DNA that is present in both normal and cancerous or precancerous cells~~; and,